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Operational activities for development: triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

Qatar:* draft resolution

Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/211 of 22 December 1989, 47/199 of 22 December 1992, 50/120 of 20 December 1995, 52/203 of 18 December 1997, 52/12 B of 19 December 1997, 53/192 of 15 December 1998 and 56/201 of 21 December 2001, as well as Economic and Social Council resolutions 2002/29 of 25 July 2002 and 2003/3 of 11 July 2003, and other relevant resolutions,

Reaffirming the importance of the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities, through which the General Assembly establishes key system-wide policy orientations for the development cooperation and country-level modalities of the United Nations system,

Recalling the role of the Economic and Social Council in providing coordination and guidance to the United Nations system to ensure that those policy orientations are implemented on a system-wide basis in accordance with Assembly resolutions 48/162 of 20 December 1993, 50/227 of 24 May 1996 and 57/270 B of 23 June 2003,

Recalling also the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 8 September 2000[1] and major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, and their importance for international development cooperation, in particular for the operational activities for development of the United Nations system,

* On behalf of States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China.

[1] See resolution 55/2.

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Reiterating that developing countries are responsible for their own development processes, and in this context stressing the responsibility of the international community, in partnership, to assist developing countries in their national development efforts,

Recognizing that new technologies present an opportunity to accelerate development, especially in developing countries, and the need to ensure that the access to such technologies is even, adequate, non-discriminatory and not politically motivated,

Reaffirming the need to ensure, in a coherent and timely manner, the full implementation of all the elements of its resolutions 44/211, 47/199, 50/120, 53/192, 56/201 and the parts relevant to operational activities for development of its resolution 52/12 B, which should be considered an integral part of the present resolution,

Reiterating the importance of the development of national capacities as a central goal of the development cooperation of the United Nations system,

I. Introduction

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;[2]

2. *Reaffirming* that the fundamental characteristics of the operational activities of the United Nations system should be, inter alia, their universal, voluntary and grant nature, their neutrality and their multilateralism, as well as their ability to respond to the development needs of developing countries in a flexible manner, and that the operational activities of the United Nations system are carried out for the benefit of recipient countries, at the request of those countries and in accordance with their own policies and priorities for development;

3. *Emphasizes* that the operational activities for development of the United Nations system should be valued and assessed on the basis of their impact on the recipient countries as contributions to enhance their capacity to pursue poverty eradication, sustained economic growth and sustainable development, and should translate into national terms the development agenda emerging from the Millennium Declaration[1] and major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields;

4. *Recognizes* that the real purpose of reform is to make the United Nations development system more efficient and effective in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, on the basis of the priorities of the recipient countries, and that efforts should be strengthened in further shifting the focus of reforms from process to results;

5. *Requests* the organizations of the United Nations system to (a) continue their efforts to respond to national development plans, policies and priorities, which constitute the only viable frame of reference for programming their operational activities at the country level, (b) align their operational strategic approaches, including through the common country assessments and the United Nations

[2] A/59/85-E/2004/68 and A/59/387.

Development Assistance Framework, with national development strategies and national poverty reduction strategies, where they exist, and (c) pursue the full integration of the operational activities for development at the country level with national planning and programming, under the ownership, and leadership and with the agreement of the national Government, while ensuring the full involvement of all relevant stakeholders at the national level at all stages of this process; and requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on this issue before the next triennial comprehensive policy review;

II. Funding for operational activities for development of the United Nations system

6. *Expresses concern* that the focus of funding patterns of operational activities continues to shift from long-term development orientation towards temporary and short-term humanitarian activities, and urges donor countries to enhance their contributions to core resources for development;

7. *Reiterates its call upon* all developed countries to take concrete steps towards reaching the target of providing official development assistance at the level of 0.7 per cent of gross national product as soon as possible, requests all donor countries and countries in a position to do so to substantially increase their contributions to the organizations of the United Nations system on a multi-year basis, particularly to their non-earmarked resource budgets, and in that context urges developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards reaching the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product as official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of gross national product to least developed countries;

8. *Invites* the governing bodies of all organizations of the United Nations development system to address systematically the funding of their operational activities, and calls upon all member States of those organizations to explore, where appropriate, additional sources of financial support and alternative funding modalities so as to secure the critical mass of resources, in particular non-earmarked ones, required to ensure adequate functioning and the pursuit of long-term objectives identified as internationally agreed development goals, including targets established at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries;

9. *Requests* the Economic and Social Council, at its operational activities segment, to undertake on a regular basis a comprehensive review of the trends and perspectives in funding for the development cooperation of the United Nations system, comparing it with other forms of multilateral development cooperation;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, to explore various funding options for increasing financing for operational activities and to examine ways to enhance the predictability, long-term stability, reliability and adequacy of funding for the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, including through the identification of possible new funding mechanisms, such as assessed contributions, negotiated pledges and voluntary contributions, while preserving the advantages of the current funding modalities, and submit a report to the General Assembly through the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in 2005;

III. Capacity-building

11. *Calls upon* United Nations organizations to provide further support to the efforts of developing countries to establish and/or maintain effective national planning institutions, and support the implementation and, as necessary, the devising of national strategies for capacity-building in their pursuit of internationally agreed development goals;

12. *Also calls upon* United Nations organizations to adopt measures which ensure sustainability in capacity-building activities, by enhancing and further developing programme execution modalities so as to maximize support for national capacity development;

13. *Stresses* that developing countries, in order to meet internationally agreed development goals, including Millennium Development Goals, should have access to new and emerging technologies, which requires technology transfer, technical cooperation and the building and nurturing of a scientific and technological capacity to participate in the development and adaptation of these technologies to local conditions, and in this regard urges Member States and the United Nations system, including funds, programmes and agencies, to ensure the promotion and transfer of new and emerging technologies in developing countries through their planning instruments;

IV. Transaction costs and efficiency

14. *Invites* all the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system actively involved in development cooperation activities and their respective management, to adopt harmonization and simplification measures, such as streamlining procedures, avoiding duplication and waste, alleviating the burden of reporting requirements and reducing transaction costs of operational activities for development, with a view to achieving a significant reduction in the administrative and procedural burden on the organizations and their national partners that derives from the preparation and implementation of operational activities;

15. *Calls upon* the organizations of the United Nations system to make significant progress in such areas as decentralization, delegation of authority, delivery and financial regulations, flexible use and allocation of personnel and sharing of services and premises, so as to make the country-level functioning of the United Nations development system more efficient and effective;

V. Coherence, effectiveness and relevance of operational activities for development

16. *Takes note* of the progress made by the United Nations system in the context of an improved functioning of the resident coordinator system, as well as through mechanisms such as the Common Country Assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, to achieve greater country-level programmatic coherence within the system and through their impact on teamwork among the organizations of the system, particularly those represented at the country level;

17. *Highlights* that, in spite of this progress, the participation of the funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations development system in country-level operational activities for development and field-level coordination

mechanisms is still uneven and, for some organizations, inadequate, and in this context calls upon the United Nations system to improve coordination by mobilizing and using its expertise in support of country-level operational activities for development at the request of national authorities;

18. *Calls upon* the United Nations development system to undertake a determined effort for a more inclusive approach in promoting inter-agency collaboration, at both the country and the headquarters levels, and requests the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Group, to take the necessary steps to secure a more participatory involvement of the United Nations development system in country-level operations and their coordination mechanisms, as well as to ensure a more active inclusion of those organizations that have no country offices;

19. *Urges* the United Nations system to enhance the effectiveness of its operational activities for development, including through further financial, organizational and technical support for the resident coordinator system, and strongly recommends that the United Nations system draw from the accumulated experience available within the system in all pertinent economic, social, environmental and other technical domains, including such areas as employment, economic management, knowledge-sharing and transfer of technology, rural development, human settlements and urbanization, and trade, especially in those cases where these domains are crucial to the development of the recipient country, facilitating the access of developing countries to the services available within the system on the basis of its comparative advantages and expertise;

20. *Stresses* that funding for the strengthening of the United Nations field presence should be additional to programmed resources for recipient countries;

21. *Requests*, in that regard, a more comprehensive system-wide involvement of all organizations of the United Nations system in the overall effort to support developing countries through a better use of the contribution of specialized agencies, regional commissions and other United Nations agencies, including those with no country representation or limited country-level presence, ensuring that the Common Country Assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework respond to the development plan and strategies of the country concerned and facilitate the fuller use of capacities available within the system as a whole on the basis of its comparative advantages, while maintaining the strategic select orientations of those instruments, without prejudice to those contributions that the country may need from highly specialized technical interventions and that may not find adequate definition in system-wide coordination mechanisms;

22. *Calls upon* all the funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations development system to adhere to national execution modalities;

VI. Country-level capacity of the United Nations system

23. *Reiterates* the principle, as contained in resolutions 44/211 and 47/199, that the country-level presence of the United Nations system should be tailored to the specific development needs of recipient countries, as required by their country programmes, and that the range and quantity of skills and expertise assembled by the United Nations system at the country level, under the team leadership of the resident coordinator, including through system-wide knowledge networks and

communities of practice, should correspond to the technical backstopping and capacity-building needs and requirements of the developing countries;

24. *Requests* the United Nations organizations of the development system, while considering means to strengthen their country-level capacities, focusing on the specific development needs of recipient countries, to avoid taking over responsibilities of other Secretariat departments, inter alia, the Department of Public Information, which could weaken operational capacities;

25. *Invites* United Nations organizations of the development system to consider means to strengthen their country-level capacities, including through complementary measures at their headquarters;

VII. Evaluation of operational activities for development

26. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to assess the effectiveness of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, including in particular by assessing the effective use of all capacities available to provide a comprehensive and flexible response to developing countries' demand for development support, and further requests him to report on the results of this assessment in the context of the next triennial policy review at its sixty-second session;

27. *Recognizes* the need to optimize the linking of evaluation to performance in the achievement of developmental goals, and encourages the United Nations development system to strengthen its evaluation activities with particular focus on development results, including through the effective use of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework results matrix, the systematic use of monitoring and evaluation approaches at the system-wide level and the promotion of joint and/or collaborative approaches to the evaluation, and further encourages the United Nations Evaluation Group, under the aegis of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to make further progress in system-wide collaboration on evaluation;

28. *Requests* the United Nations development system to conduct evaluations of its operations at the country level, in close consultation with national Governments, and, for this purpose, to assist Governments in the development of national evaluation capacities, through, inter alia, better use of lessons learned from past activities at the country level, recognizing that national Governments have primary responsibility in coordinating and evaluating external assistance, including that from the United Nations system;

29. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session evaluating the activities of the United Nations funds and programmes and the implementation of their mandates with a view to, inter alia:

(a) Avoiding duplication of mandates and activities among themselves as well as with other United Nations institutions, in order to preserve the long-term development orientation of the United Nations funds and programmes, in accordance with their original mandates in all operational activities, including in situations of transition from relief to development;

(b) Avoiding the evolution of their functions beyond their original mandate without the prior approval of the General Assembly;

VIII. Regional dimensions

30. *Calls upon* the organizations of the United Nations development system, the regional commissions and other regional entities, as appropriate, to intensify their cooperation and adopt more collaborative approaches to support country-level development initiatives at the request of recipient countries, including through closer collaboration within the resident coordinator system and improving mechanisms for access to the technical capacities of the United Nations system at the regional and subregional levels;

31. *Invites* the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations development system to give greater and more systematic consideration to the regional dimensions of development cooperation and to promote measures for more intensive inter-agency collaboration at the regional and subregional levels, facilitating inter-country exchanges of experience and promoting both intraregional and interregional cooperation, as appropriate;

IX. South-South cooperation and development of national capacities

32. *Recommends* that South-South cooperation be considered a driver of development effectiveness and be incorporated in the multi-year funding frameworks of all United Nations funds and programmes;

33. *Urges* Member States and the organizations of the United Nations development system to celebrate the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation in a befitting and comprehensive manner every year;

34. *Emphasizes* the need to mobilize additional resources for enhancing South-South cooperation, including through triangular cooperation;

35. *Urges* organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to mainstream, in their programmes and through their country-level activities and country offices, modalities to support South-South cooperation that would promote the identification and dissemination of best practices, promote indigenous knowledge, know-how and technology in the South and facilitate networking among experts and institutions in developing countries;

36. *Encourages*, in this regard, United Nations funds and programmes to contribute to the periodic updating of the Web of Information for Development electronic databank operated by the United Nations Development Programme Special Unit on South-South Cooperation, in coordination with Governments, allowing for the wide diffusion of and access to the information contained therein, including experiences, best practices and potential partners in South-South cooperation;

37. *Highlights* that, in spite of progress achieved in this area, further efforts are required to better understand the approaches and potential of national capacity development through South-South cooperation as a core objective of the development cooperation of the United Nations system, and calls upon all the organizations of the system to maximize their support for national capacity development in the context of South-South cooperation;

X. Gender

38. *Calls upon* all organizations of the United Nations system to articulate specific country-level goals and targets to be pursued in accordance with the national development strategies and within their organizational mandates to achieve gender equality and gender mainstreaming in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes;

39. *Urges* all organizations of the system to collaborate with the resident coordinator system to provide gender specialist resources, in support of gender mainstreaming in country-level activities in all sectors where they operate, working closely with relevant national counterparts, in generating quantitative and qualitative information required to produce better analysis of gender-related issues of development;

40. *Encourages* the continuing efforts to improve the gender balance in appointments within the United Nations system at the headquarters and the country level in positions that affect operational activities with due regard to representation of women from developing countries and keeping in mind the principle of equitable geographic representation;

XI. Transition from relief to development

41. *Recognizes* that the United Nations development system has a vital role to play in situations of transition from relief to development, and, given the complexity of challenges that countries in those circumstances face, requests the organizations of the system to take the necessary measures to strengthen interdepartmental and inter-agency coordination to promote an integrated approach which takes account of the country-specific character of those challenges, within a coherent, coordinated and harmonized inter-agency assistance at the country level;

42. *Stresses* in this regard the need for such transitional activities to be undertaken under national ownership through the development of national capacities at all levels to manage the transition process;

43. *Recommends* the development of South-South cooperation modalities, including triangular cooperation modalities, to assist the transition from relief to development through, inter alia, the use of information technologies and knowledge management systems, as well as exchange of expertise, to enable countries in that situation to benefit from the experience of other developing countries;

44. *Urges* Member States to consider more coordinated and flexible approaches to funding operational activities for development in situations of transition from relief to development, making use of multiple resource mobilization instruments, stresses the need for adequacy and timeliness of the resource availability in the recovery phase, and further stresses that contributions to humanitarian assistance and other short-term funding requirements in transition situations should not be provided at the expense of development assistance but through additional funding efforts that meet the requirements of recovery and reconstruction;

XII. Follow-up

45. *Reaffirms* that the governing bodies of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system should take appropriate actions for the full implementation of the present resolution, in line with paragraphs 91 and 92 of resolution 56/201;

46. *Requests* the Secretary-General, after consultation with the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, to submit a report to the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 2005, on an appropriate management process, containing clear guidelines, targets, benchmarks and time frames for the full implementation of the present resolution;

47. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council, during the operational activities segment of its substantive session of 2006, to examine the operational activities of the United Nations system in order to evaluate the implementation of the present resolution with a view to ensuring its full implementation;

48. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of the present resolution in the context of the triennial policy review, and to make appropriate recommendations.